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ABSTRACT

As part of a series of manuals prepared for reading education workshops for parents and educators, this booklet focuses on developing a positive attitude toward reading. Divided into three sections, the booklet describes activities for parents to use with their children to motivate them to read. The first section describes seven activities for parents to use with children in preschool through grade two, including a sample calendar page for marking quality time spent with a child. The growing independence of children in grades three through six is addressed in the second section, and 13 activities are suggested to motivate readers in this age group. The last section provides a brief psychological sketch of the adolescent and emphasizes the importance of a proper reading environment for children in grades seven through twelve. Suggested home reading experiences include television and reading, a home library and reading center, oral reading, and books as gifts. (AEA)

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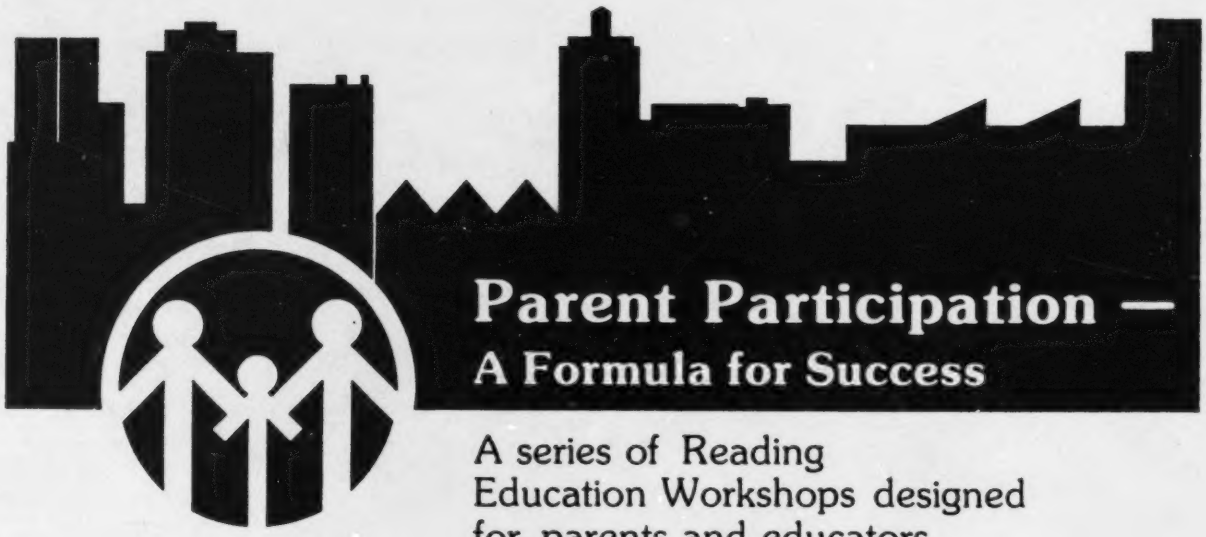

Parent Participation — A Formula for Success

A series of Reading Education Workshops designed for parents and educators

See, Hear and Do: Building a Positive Attitude

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Parent Participation -

A Formula for Success

See, Hear and Do:
Building a Positive Attitude

Division of Reading Effectiveness
Indiana Department of Public Instruction
Harold H. Negley, Superintendent
August 1980

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Introduction

The development of a positive attitude should begin the moment a child is able to think. In your role as parent, you are in the unique position of being able to help your child develop this important trait. This process of development, begun early in a child's life, must be nurtured continuously. As children progress through their educational career, it is essential that their attitude toward education and learning be positive.

A child's attitude will influence the manner with which each new task is approached. It will often influence whether a student is successful or unsuccessful. Parental attitude will definitely influence the child's. When you, the parent, show interest in your child's achievements, the youngster will be stimulated to achieve. When you show that you value reading and learning, your child will acquire a similar value. When you demonstrate enthusiasm for school and learning, your enthusiasm will be contagious.

Be attentive to the kinds of involvement that promote positive attitudes. Many ideas can be gained from various reference sources, such as this booklet. All that you do will certainly bring rewarding results for both you and your child.

Building a Positive Attitude:

Preschool to Grade 2

Preschool to Grade 2

Motivation

Children are not born wanting to read. The development of motivation for reading is dependent upon such aspects as:

1. Interactions and involvements with the surroundings and the people near the child;
2. Stimulation through curiosity, interest and exploration;
3. The child's positive self-image;
4. Consistent and positive reinforcement from individuals who are important to the child;
5. The general attitude of family members concerning the importance of reading.

Motivation for reading begins at home. Parents must become actively involved in the process of providing a fertile environment for nurturing a desire to read within the child. Action words characterize the growth of motivation for reading.

Start early. During infancy, talk and sing as you feed, bathe and cuddle the child. The infant will become accustomed to the meter and tonal patterns. Children learn a language by hearing the language and adapting the words to suit their needs.

Talk to your preschooler. Broaden the child's vocabulary by pointing out objects as they are used in the kitchen, the laundry, the workroom and other familiar areas. Answer questions, but don't tell the child more than he or she wants to know.

Listen to the child with genuine interest. Try to give your complete attention and indicate that the youngster's communication is of value.

Show the preschooler the world around him or her. Plan walking trips in the neighborhood. Take short bus or train rides to broaden the child's experiences. Using a camera on short sightseeing trips will provide an accurate account for further conversations.

Read yourself and read to the child. Reading is fun; it has a purpose and fulfills needs. Demonstrate all these ideas to the child.

Praise, encourage and support the child through a positive approach. It is important to help the child develop a healthy self-concept.

Remember:

a d m i r e
o b s e r v e
t a l k
p r a i s e
v i s i t
r e a d
t r a v e l
l i s t e n
s u p p o r t
e n c o u r a g e

Activities

It is hoped that the following activities will incorporate the action words listed for parents.

1. Time, Talk, Touch (Infant-Toddler):

In everyday activities, keep the baby involved in language. At feeding time, talk about what the child is eating. Example: "Here is your banana. A banana needs to be peeled. As the peeling is removed, the color will change. Take a bite, it feels soft and squishy in your mouth."

During the bath and dressing time, point out parts of the body and articles of clothing. As the word "toe" is spoken, wiggle the toe to help the child relate the abstract word to the concrete object.

2. Dough Doodles (Preschool):

Children enjoy working with pliable materials. These materials aid in the development of motor skills and also develop the awareness of the sense of touch. Individual letters of the alphabet can be molded from the dough by rolling the material into long, thin strips and then forming the letters. Combining the sense of touch and the sense of sight can create interest in forming words. When the parent becomes involved in this activity, it indicates to the child that the parent feels this is meaningful and important.

Play Dough Recipe

1 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1/2 cup water
a few drops of liquid soap
a few drops of food coloring (optional)

Mix flour and salt in a bowl.
Slowly add water, soap and food coloring.
Shape into a ball.

Keep refrigerated in a closed bag or container.

3. Me, Myself and I (Kindergarten):

In order to be positively motivated, children need to feel secure about themselves and realize that the adults who surround them care about their interests.

Gather a supply of old magazines and a piece of thin cardboard. Torn backs from cereal boxes could be useful. Explain that the child should tear or cut pictures from the magazines that represent him or her.

Example:
1. Favorite foods
2. Favorite things to do
3. Favorite places to visit

Talk with the child concerning the collage. Conversations focusing on the pictures can provide insight into the child's interests.

4. Diary Doings (Kindergarten):

Five-year-olds enjoy talking about themselves. Capitalize on this type of interest. Use a large scrap book and felt-tipped markers. Encourage the child to draw pictures of each day's activities. Include invitations, birthday cards, photographs and other special items. Let the child dictate captions for each page. Place the scrap book in an accessible area. Take time to sit down and look at the book with the child. This activity provides opportunities for the development of a positive self-image in the child; for encouraging the child to realize that books can serve as a free-time activity; for establishing the idea that reading is fun for both children and adults.

5. Catalog Capers (Grades 1-3):

Save old catalogs. On individual 3 x 5 cards place ideas for uses of the catalog, using a variety of colors for the directions. Place the cards in a paper bag along with felt-tipped pens of different colors. If the child chooses an activity written in red, a red felt-tipped pen should be chosen to circle the material in the catalog.

Example:
1. Choose the items needed for a camping trip. Circle all items.
2. Select three gifts for your mother for her birthday. Circle the items.
3. You have $10.00 to spend. Circle the items that could be bought for $10.00.

6. Follow Your Nose! (Grades 1-3):

Take a walking trip around the neighborhood, to the school, to a friend's house, to grandmother's house or any other familiar location. While walking, make note of the color of the houses, names of streets, intersections and other landmarks. On a large sheet of paper help the child design a map using names and colors of land-

marks. Use the map as a basis for:

1. Discovering alternate routes.
2. Choosing fund-raising projects (cookie selling, etc.).
3. Finding new friends.

7. Mark the Calendar (Parents):

Parents and children need to spend quality time together. Some rules for ensuring quality are:

1. Focus on the child (do not be involved in other activities during quality time).
2. Capitalize on the child's interests during conversation and activity times.
3. Be sincere in listening and talking with the child.
4. Take time to have fun.

On the following page is a calendar to be used for marking quality time spent with the child. Mark it for one month. Did quality time spent with the child increase?

QUALITY TIME

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

Building a Positive Attitude:

Grades 3 to 6

Motivation

At the elementary school age, children mature and extend their activities outside the home--spending more time away from the family, becoming less dependent on parents and broadening their interests. The growing independence of their child presents an interesting challenge to parents. In order to keep in touch with the youngster's interests, it is important for parents to become careful observers of the child's behaviors and activities. Information gained through parental observation can provide clues for meaningful motivation activities for intermediate grade children.

Activities

1. Creative Equations:

Children of all ages love puzzles. This activity will help students think creatively in the content area. Make up word equations which the child will examine. The clues given will aid the child in arriving at an answer. These can be used to learn new words or to check story content.

Example: 1. Cold blowing winds + snow and ice = winter

2. Bright colored leaves + _____ = fall

3. _____ + tall buildings = a city

4. Bacon + _____ = breakfast*

*2. School
3. Busy streets
4. Eggs

2. Let's Play Newscaster:

Listening to the radio seems to be a favorite pastime of children. Have your child write announcements about activities, community events or even humorous family happenings. These announcements should be pretaped. They might be played before or after dinner.

Suggested News Bulletins:
1. Community arts and crafts show
2. Sale at a local store
3. Garage sale
4. Missing pet or found pet
5. Church function
6. Results of school track meet
7. Results of baseball game
8. Mom or dad running out of gas in the car
9. Birthday of a family member
10. Birth of a new child
11. Report card
12. Anniversary of parents or grandparents

3. Private Eye:

Provide a list of questions to be answered by the child while riding in the car and looking out the window. A time limit for the various sets of questions should be established. This will keep the game active and the child will be aware of more surroundings in a shorter amount of time.

Example:
1. Name a tall building.
2. Name some ways the building might be used.
3. Is there a flag waving in the breeze?
4. What types of flowers can be seen?
5. Describe various types of road signs which are seen.
6. Write down the license number of a car.
7. Are most of the cars new or old models?
8. What types of animals can be seen?
9. Describe the most attractive house that can be seen from the road.
10. Describe the difference between the city and rural roads.

4. Bag It

After finishing reading a book, the child can gather objects which represent the story and then describe the objects to you, explaining how they relate to the story.

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5. Let's Make a Story:

Most children love mystery and suspense. This can be a useful tool in helping the child write a story. To begin, start the story with a few facts; then let the child make up the sequence.

Example:

1. Jimmy Smith, the world renown detective, was summoned by Scotland Yard to find out who had... (ask your child to fill this in).
2. Detective Smith began by... (again, prompt your child).
3. He then sat down and... (child fills in the story).
4. Finally, he asked just one question... (child fills in the story).
5. It became clear that the solution was... (child finishes the story).

6. Mystery Person:

After reading a story, the child asks "Who are you?" for one minute. Each time the question is asked, give a fact about a story character. After a minute, the child should write as many facts as he or she can remember and then decide who the mystery person is. For variation, parent and child could switch roles.

7. Snapshot Sequence:

While taking a family outing, encourage the child to take pictures of the main events of the trip. After returning, encourage the child to arrange the pictures in the sequence in which events occurred.

8. Fun With Comics:

Use the comic strips to motivate the child to understand sequencing. Number the back of each section and cut them out. Shuffle the sections so they are out of sequence. After putting them in order, the child can look at the numbers on the back to check.

9. Magic Tricks:

Provide the child with a book about magic tricks. Encourage reading it and experimenting with some of the tricks. After some practice, the young magician may want to perform either for the family or for friends.

10. Riddle Crazy:

Children of all ages love riddles. Ask your child a riddle and encourage him or her to ask you riddles as well. A riddle book would serve as an excellent motivation.

11. Which Is Best?:

Encourage the child to become involved in research. Many activities in the home can serve as research motivators.

Example:

1. Before purchasing a new appliance, the child can read the consumer magazines which indicate advantages and disadvantages of specific name brands, models and types.

2. Planning a vacation involves methods of transportation, places to stay, sights to see and special eating places. The library is stocked with a host of travel books which can provide specific information on domestic and foreign travel. Travel agency brochures are additional sources of written material.

3. Find all the recipes using tuna fish and make a decision concerning which recipe is best for the family and their individual tastes.

12. What's in a Name?:

Books designed to help new parents choose names for their babies often contain origins and specialized meanings of names. It is fun to compile lists of names of friends or classmates accompanied by added information about specific names.

13. Rummage and Garage Sales:

Used books can provide a wealth of materials on a variety of subjects cheaply. If a sale is in the neighborhood, prepare a list with your child of specific book types needed.

Example:
1. A book for a flower-loving grandmother
2. A book for a sick friend
3. A book for a preschool brother
4. A book on pet care

This activity serves two purposes. The child scans books to check topics and also develops self-confidence in making choices.

Building a Positive Attitude;

Grades 7 to 12

Introduction

Pressures of society mount as a child reaches the age of 12, and they continue to increase throughout the high school years. Peers and social groups become very influential in a child's life. Body changes occur rapidly and may cause confusion and a decrease in self-confidence. Responsibility for independent decision making increases. Teenagers are expected to become accountable for their own behavior. The period of development between the ages of 12 and 17 is characterized by rapid change in emotional status, stretching for independence away from the home and a constant searching for identity.

Parents of young adults need to have sympathy and understanding for the pressures imposed on their children by society. It is important to bolster the teenager's self-confidence through supportive, positive parental action. Since the young adult tends to spend less time in the home, parents must be constantly alert for optimum moments for motivational activities. Parents must also find subtle, unique and meaningful methods of balancing their teenager's need for independence with a continued need for parental guidance.

The information contained herein was compiled for parents of secondary age children. The ideas, suggestions and activities were designed to provide experiences in the home which will motivate children to read.

A Proper Reading Environment

Parents who assume the responsibility for creating a suitable reading environment in the home are fulfilling a vital function. Listed below are some suggestions to help establish such an atmosphere.

1. Parents who take the initial step of becoming sincerely interested in the progress of their child have made the most important move toward helping that child achieve success in reading. The more trusted, adjusted, praised, accepted, loved and supported a child is made to feel, the better his or her feelings of self-value and confidence become.
2. Within reason, children of all ages should be allowed to read whatever, whenever and wherever they desire. Even if their choice of material does not appear to be of interest or value to adults, it is better than not reading at all.
3. Children choose to read in a variety of places. What many parents consider to be distractions, such as television, music or other people, may not interfere with a child's reading habits. Older children often feel more comfortable in a familiar place in the home, usually in an area or space they identify as their own, such as their bedroom or a particular chair. Regardless of a child's choice of places to read, parents can contribute to a comfortable atmosphere by not criticizing the child's choice and by attempting to prevent interruptions.
4. It is not necessary to observe children as they read. Most children will not hesitate to ask parents for help

if they do not know a word or do not understand what they are reading.

5. Parents should make themselves available and willing to discuss what their child has been reading. Make a habit of expressing an interest and asking about what your youngster has been reading.

Ideas and Suggestions for Home Reading Experiences

In general, those reading-based activities which allow the child or young adult to become involved in family and home functions and duties are the most simple and least threatening to those children who do not appear to have confidence or interest in reading.

Strive for situations at home in which the information received from reading or the completion of a task which requires and involves reading becomes a rewarding experience for the child. Listed below are some suggestions for achieving positive experiences.

A. TV and Reading:

Many parents fear that television turns children off toward reading, but selective exposure to television viewing can be a highly motivating influence to children. It can even encourage them to read. In many school libraries the most circulated books are those which are related to the television programs, celebrities and athletes that children view frequently.

Parents can make television compatible with their efforts to encourage reading by following these suggestions:

1. Try not to indicate dissatisfaction with television viewing by telling the child to "turn the television off and read a book instead." This may make reading seem like an undesirable activity, a chore or a punishment for watching too much television. When it is necessary to limit television viewing, suggest reading as but one of the many alternate activities from which to choose.
2. Observe the viewing habits of the child. Try to locate reading materials which relate to favorite television shows or areas of interest.
3. Ask the child to take the responsibility for planning a personal or family viewing schedule for a few days. Completing this task will require consulting and reading newspapers and listings.
4. There is a vast amount of print shown on the television screen, especially during commercials. The next time a product is to be purchased, ask the child to help by watching for a special sale, a particular brand name or a store where the item is sold. The information may be encountered when the product is advertised on television, or if it is an item of particular interest, the child may also go to other printed sources to locate the information.

B. Home Library:

Creating a home library, if one does not already exist, is perhaps the most simple method of encouraging a child to read. If the library reflects only the interests and abilities of the

parents, it has no relevance for the child. Exhibiting proper recreational reading habits in the presence of children is of little value if they have no books of their own. Here are some suggestions for establishing or improving an existing home library.

1. Encourage the child to contribute reading materials to the library. If he or she has none to contribute, help the child begin to accumulate some. Parents who communicate frequently with their children and keep abreast of their hobbies and interests will have little trouble making selections.
2. When creating a library in the home, allow the child to assist in the selection of shelving, to determine where in the home it will be located and to help with any decoration to be done. The child may wish to have a personal library, separate from the rest of the books in the home. If this is the case, provide all the assistance and encouragement possible.
3. When selecting books or materials for the child, include a wide range of possible interests and subjects.
4. Include easy-to-read, less time-consuming materials such as magazines, comic and cartoon books, and newspapers.
5. If the child receives no special interest magazines, begin a subscription, allowing the youngster to subscribe to a publication of his or her choice.

6. Enroll the child in a mail order book club. Let him or her make the selections.

C. Home Reading Center:

Many household activities and duties often require reading and following directions (e.g., food preparation and recipes, grocery shopping, menu planning, household cleaning, simple auto maintenance, gardening and plant care, and small appliance repair or assembly). Creating and encouraging the use of a center with materials relevant to these activities could be accomplished with some of the following activities:

1. Set aside a drawer, cabinet or bookself and begin a central collection of repair manuals, cookbooks, manufacturers' pamphlets and guides, daily newspapers and directions for assembly of household items.
2. Allow the child to use the materials in the center and assist in as many of these activities or duties as is possible.
3. Encourage the child to read the directions to another person or to assume responsibility for the entire task.
4. Encourage the child to contribute materials to the center which apply to his or her personal belongings (directions for care of clothing or manuals for TV and stereo).
5. If the center will be located in an area of the home/ garage or in a box or cabinet that can be painted and decorated, allow the child to assist with this activity.

6. Do not demand that the child use the center. Instead, direct him or her toward activities which require reading for completion. This places the child in a position to use reading skills to develop feelings of importance and achievement.

D. Oral Reading:

1. Older children enjoy being read to, just as younger children do. Most young adults will not sit still long enough to hear an entire story, but parents can find time to read to children during meals or when riding in the car. The material parents encounter that is best suited for sharing with this age group will most likely be found in newspapers and magazines. Select short, high interest articles or passages of news stories, and make these oral reading experiences short (30 seconds in length). Do not force the child to listen.
2. Conduct a spontaneous reading session in the home when there is not too much distraction from TV or other activities. Let all family members take a turn at reading out loud. Again, make this a short experience and do not force participation.
3. Older children can be encouraged to assume the responsibility for reading to younger brothers and sisters. Activities might include a short bedtime story or spending a few moments helping with homework.

E. Books as Gifts

1. Next holiday or birthday, give a book or a gift certificate so the child may select a book related to his

or her own interests.

2. Suggest that the child begin to give as well as receive books. This creates an opportunity to shop for and select a book for another person. Perhaps in doing so the child will encounter yet another book related to his or her own interests.
3. Make gifts to the child of magazines or book club subscriptions.
4. Suggest to friends or relatives that a book might make a unique gift.

F. Errands

1. Ask the child to do an errand and leave detailed written, rather than oral, instructions.
2. Take the child on shopping trips and make a brief stop at a library or shopping center bookstore. This will provide a brief and informal opportunity to shop for books.
3. Send the child to purchase reading material such as a magazine, newspaper, book or TV Guide. Once at the newsstand or bookstore the child may seize the opportunity to browse or select additional reading material related to his or her own interests.

G. Vacation or Recreational Planning

1. Plan to go to a movie, festival, play, concert or other community activity and give the child the responsibility of planning the event. This will involve reading a newspaper or other material. This activity can be done

in a short period of time and is usually of high interest.

2. Give the child the responsibility of assisting or independently planning parts of a family vacation. Allow the child to help establish the itinerary, select lodging, determine routes, plan the budget and meals or select side trips. All of these preparations can be of high interest and will involve the reading of newspapers, pamphlets, maps, travel guides and brochures.
3. Take advantage of area events ("500" Race or a summer festival, for example). Send for brochures or gather newspaper clippings and advertisements which describe or are related to the event. Make these available for the child to read. Include them in the home library, if possible.

H. Mail:

1. Ask relatives to write to the child or to send books and comics in the mail.
2. Give the child the responsibility for sorting all daily mail and reading through advertisements and "junk" mail to decide which articles to keep or discard.
3. Place the child's name on a few mailing lists at local theaters, bookstores, shopping centers or mail order houses. Send away for free federal, state or local governmental publications which may be of special interest. This should greatly increase the volume of mail which arrives with the child's name on it.

Summary

One of the most valuable services parents can provide as their child grows older is a continued concern and a willingness to help with the child's reading progress. The most helpful efforts will be those which foster a relaxed, comfortable and supportive attitude toward this reading ability. Parents who create a good reading environment in the home, remain aware of their child's interests, communicate with their child and guide their child toward reading activities in the home will share the growth and progress the child experiences.